

## Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

INT-08 OEP-01 SCEM-05 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 OMB-01 EB-11

INRE-00 RSR-01 /111 W

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P 272203 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9200

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 2606

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG VE

SUBJECT: US- VENEZUELAN PETROLEUM CONVERSATIONS

1. I HAVE INVITED AMBASSADOR SOSA RODRIGUEZ TO LUNCH WITH ME ALONE ON MONDAY, APRIL 2, REMINDING HIM THAT FOREIGN MINISTER CALVANI HAD SUGGESTED THAT WE CONTINUE OUR CONVERSATIONS LOOKING TOWARD AN EVENTUAL ENERGY AGREEMENT. AT THIS LUNCHEON I SHALL AGAIN TABLE THREE ALTERNATIVE DEPARTMENTAL PROPOSALS FOR AN AGENDA OF THESE CONVERSATIONS AND UNDOUBTEDLY, ACCORDING TO CALVANI, AMBASSADOR SOSA WILL REVERT TO HIS SUPPOSED " NOTE VERBALE" OF AUGUST 1971.

2. MEANWHILE, AS OUR RECENT TELEGRAMS HAVE SUGGESTED, PRESS STORIES FROM THE UNITED STATES ABOUT A U. S. DESIRE TO NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT ON THE ORINOCO BELT HAVE PROVOKED A RATHER EMOTIONAL RESPONSE FROM THE MINISTER OF MINES AND HYDROCARBONS. FOR EXAMPLE, IN TODAY' S NACIONAL, ONE HEADLINE READS " UNITED STATES PROPOSES A PETROLEUM TREATY WITH VENEZUELA," COUNTERPOISED BY PEREZ LA SALVIA' S BALST THAT " VENEZUELA WILL NOT NEGOTIATE ANY PETROLIFEROUS AREA AND HAS NOT RECEIVED ANY PROPOSAL FOR AN AGREEMENT WITH WASHINGTON."

3. THE DIFFERENCE HERE LIES IN PEREZ LA SALVIA' S POLITICAL ASPIRATION NOT TO APPEAR AS " NEGOTIATING" THE RELINQUISHMENT  
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OF ANY VENEZUELAN MINERAL ASSETS TO A FOREIGN POWER AND OUR PROBABLY OVER- HASTY AND REPEATED STATEMENTS FROM WASHINGTON THAT WE ARE INDEED INTERESTED IN AN AGREEMENT ON THE ORINOCO BELT.

4. ON BOTH SIDES SILENCE IS THE COUNSEL OF WISDOM.

5. I SHALL PROBABLY NOT SEE CALVANI FOR A PRIVATE CONFAB UNTIL HIS DEPARTURE FOR WASHINGTON APRIL 3, BUT MAY HAVE A BRIEF CHAT WITH HIM TOMORROW NIGHT AT A HUGE RECEPTION FOR THE JAMAICAN PRIME MINISTER. HOWEVER, CALVANI AND I SEE EYE TO EYE ON THE NEED FOR SOSA AND ME TO TALK QUIETLY WITHOUT PRESS INTERJECTIONS ON THE PART OF PEREZ LA SALVIA. IT THEREFORE WOULD BE HELPFUL AT THIS JUNCTURE FOR THE U. S. SIDE TO STOP TALKING ABOUT THE ORINOCO BELT; BUT IT WOULD BE INFINITELY MORE HELPFUL IF WE WERE GIVEN ADVANCE NOTICE OF WHATEVER ENERGY STATEMENT EMITS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE WHICH INEVITABLY WILL RELATE TO VENEZUELA'S PETROLEUM PRODUCTION AND ITS MARKET IN THE UNITED STATES. EVEN 24 HOURS ADVANCE NOTICE WOULD PUT ME IN THE POSITION TO SAY THAT WE ARE "CONSULTING" WITH THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT.  
MCCLINTOCK

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

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